

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the main investigative committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. It has authority to investigate the subjects within the Committee’s legislative jurisdiction as well as “any matter” within the jurisdiction of the other standing House Committees.

Committee Jurisdiction

Legislative Responsibilities

The legislative jurisdiction of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform includes the following areas, as set forth in House Rule X, clause 1:

Federal civil service, including intergovernmental personnel; and the status of officers and employees of the United States, including their compensation, classification, and retirement;
Municipal affairs of the District of Columbia in general (other than appropriations);
Federal paperwork reduction;
Government management and accounting measures generally;
Holidays and celebrations;
Overall economy, efficiency, and management of government operations and activities, including federal procurement;
National archives;
Population and demography generally, including the Census;
Postal service generally, including transportation of the mails;
Public information and records;
Relationship of the federal government to the states and municipalities generally; and
Reorganizations in the executive branch of the government.

Oversight Responsibilities

The oversight responsibilities of the Committee are set forth in House Rule X, clauses 2, 3, and 4.

House Rule X, clause 2(b), provides that the Committee shall review and study on a continuing basis—

(A) the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of laws and programs addressing subjects within its jurisdiction;

(B) the organization and operation of Federal agencies and entities having responsibilities for the administration and execution of laws and programs addressing subjects within its jurisdiction;

(C) any conditions or circumstances that may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation addressing subjects within its jurisdiction (whether or not a bill or resolution has been introduced with respect thereto); and

(D) future research and forecasting on subjects within its jurisdiction.

House Rule X, clause 3(i), provides that the Committee shall “review and study on a continuing basis the operation of Government activities at all levels with a view to determining their economy and efficiency.”

House Rule X, clause 4(c)(1), provides that the Committee shall:

(A) receive and examine reports of the Comptroller General of the United States and submit to the House such recommendations as it considers necessary or desirable in connection with the subject matter of the reports;

(B) evaluate the effects of laws enacted to reorganize the legislative and executive branches of the Government; and

(C) study intergovernmental relationships between the States and municipalities and between the United States and international organizations of which the United States is a member.

And House Rule X, clause 4(c)(2), provides that the Committee “may at any time conduct investigations of any matter without regard to clause 1, 2, 3, or this clause [of House Rule X] conferring jurisdiction over the matter to another standing committee.”